

Kansas Governor's Advisory Council on Domestic and Sexual Violence Response

Toolkit on Utilizing a Community High-Risk Team and Lethality Assessment to Address Intimate Partner Violence

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Purpose

Domestic violence is a continuing threat to the health and safety of Kansas communities. The Kansas Bureau of Investigation Rape and Domestic Violence Report states during the past five-year period, 2017 through 2021, there were 114,963 domestic violence incidents reported by law enforcement agencies, resulting in 56,662 arrests. Also, during this five-year period, 174 domestic violence homicides occurred and 87 of those homicides involved an intimate partner.[1]

The toolkit on Utilizing a Community High-Risk Team and Lethality Assessment to Address Intimate Partner Violence is designed to guide community partners through the development and implementation of high-risk teams utilizing lethality assessment protocols to enhance the criminal justice response to high-risk offenders and to increase support and safety for victims of intimate partner violence.

[1]Kansas Bureau of Investigation, Domestic Violence, Stalking, and Sexual Assault In Kansas As Reported by Law Enforcement Agencies 2017-2021, online: [KBI - Kansas Bureau of Investigation - Statistics - Domestic Violence and Rape Statistics](#)

Overview

The toolkit provides steps on how to develop a community-based customized **High-Risk Team (HRT)** using a lethality assessment to address criminal justice responses to **Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)** cases. The information obtained from the lethality assessment can be used at various points in the criminal justice system as allowed by Kansas statute to manage offender risk more effectively and to connect IPV victims with services.

Benefits of Using an HRT:

- Enhances communication between agencies;
- Develops individualized and comprehensive safety plans for survivors; and
- Mitigates dangers high-risk offenders pose to the community.

An HRT is comprised of multidisciplinary system professionals partnering to respond to high-risk IPV cases using a community-specific referral and selection process. The HRT manages the cases identified as high-risk by law enforcement officers or tribal police utilizing a lethality assessment to develop customized intervention plans to address offender accountability and victim safety across the criminal justice system. Intervention plans are “...case-specific plans to interrupt the cycle of escalating violence and minimize the risk of further abuse. Each partner agency defines the role it will play to keep the victim safe and hold the offender accountable. With a more complete understanding of the background, context, and status of a high-risk case, partner agencies are able to make more fully informed decisions in their individual interactions with the case.”[2]

The lethality assessment is a set of questions a law enforcement officer utilizes to identify the level of risk or danger a perpetrator poses to a victim of IPV. Risk factors commonly associated with the likelihood of a violent event occurring include elements of control, gun possession, threatening language, and history of physical violence.

“Risk assessment is a procedure whereby we measure some characteristic of a person or situation and then use that information to predict likelihood of some negative event- re-abuse, for example, as measured by re-arrest.”[3] The assessments referred to in this toolkit are actuarial tools that integrate risk factors identified by statistics drawn from large data sets.[4]

Domestic violence actuarial tools measure the potential of increased risk (such as re-abuse, re-arrest, dangerousness, and lethality) to domestic violence victims, their families, and or the community. Law enforcement officers using assessments measuring high-risk indicators that include contextual information regarding the relationship are more likely to identify violence, coercion, and control patterns, and intervene with the offender. It is important to note that an “... assessment alone does not prevent negative outcomes; rather, it is the interventions with victim-survivors and perpetrators that follow an assessment of high risk that have an opportunity to reduce risk, future violence, and homicide.”[5]

[2]Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center. (2022). Domestic violence high risk team. <http://dvhrt.org/info/frequently-asked-questions>

[3]Moyer, R. Ph.D. Emeritus Prof. of Psychology, Bates College, “Evidence-based Risk Assessment of Domestic Violence Officers: The State of the Science in 2006.”

[4] Websdale, N. (2021, September 22). The APRAIS tool, method, and philosophy. [Presentation]. Family Violence Center. <https://youtu.be/fU9TU09gwIk>

[5] Messing J.T., & Campbell, J. (2016). Informing collaborative interventions: Intimate partner violence risk assessment for front line police officers. *Policing*, 10(4), 1-13.

RISK ASSESSMENT



Benefits of Using Risk Assessments (via Battered Women's Justice Project)

- Assist victims and domestic violence victim advocates to develop more realistic safety plans.
- Help the criminal justice system identify which offenders need higher bail, inform conditions of release, and craft enhanced supervision strategies.
- Educate criminal justice practitioners and service providers about domestic violence and provide a shared language about risk factors.
- Assist perpetrator treatment programs to select the amount and types of treatment.

KANSAS COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (KCSDV) CAN PROVIDE SUPPORT THROUGHOUT THE STAGES OF TOOLKIT IMPLEMENTATION. CONTACT KCSDV AT COALITION@KCSDV.ORG OR CALL 785.232.9784

High-Risk Team Framework



Establish High-Risk Team



Initiating the Process

The formation and implementation of a High-Risk Team (HRT) using a lethality assessment tool may be initiated by any interested stakeholder(s) with a role in the community's response to intimate partner violence (IPV) within a city, county, judicial district, or any other defined geographical regions in Kansas. However, if the initiating stakeholder is not the community-based domestic violence agency or law enforcement agency, these agencies must be identified and consulted prior to moving forward.

Establish which category best correlates with the targeted geographic territory or judicial district.

- The community has an HRT but needs a lethality assessment to screen high-risk IPV cases;
- the community utilizes a lethality assessment but needs an HRT for managing high-risk IPV cases;
- the community does not have an HRT or lethality assessment tool for managing high-risk IPV cases; or
- the community has a coordinated community response addressing domestic violence responses.

A Coordinated Community Response (CCR) is a multidisciplinary team of representatives working in partnership to improve the domestic violence response. If the community has a formalized CCR multidisciplinary team, the CCR will often initiate a community HRT and lethality assessment process or assist other community stakeholders in forming an HRT and lethality assessment framework. The following table illustrates the differences between a CCR and an HRT:

Coordinated Community Response	High-Risk Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing information internally for interagency training • Community awareness and prevention • Enhancing response protocols • Utilize case review to identify gaps in system response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing information collaboratively and strategizing together • Case-specific plans • Coordinated agency intervention • Review, manage, and monitor active cases

Forming a CCR is optional and not necessary for establishing an HRT utilizing a lethality assessment tool. However, a CCR does provide an avenue, outside of individual case reviews, to develop items such as agency level policies, protocols, and trends. Existing resources are available for creating and strengthening a CCR multidisciplinary team. The [Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence](#) can provide training and technical assistance regarding CCR development or expansion.



Other helpful resources on coordinated community response include:

- [Coordination Models – Battered Women's Justice Project](#)
- [A Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence – Ellen Pence](#)
- [The Duluth Model – Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs](#)
- [CCR/SART Development Toolkit – NCCASA & NCCADV](#)
- [Wisconsin Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence CCR Toolkit – WCASA](#)

Identify High-Risk Team Members

Formation of the HRT requires an integrated interagency approach to IPV throughout the criminal justice system, which begins by identifying potential members. Below is a list of potential members for the HRT from criminal justice system and community-based agencies:

- Public Safety Answering Point, 911 dispatch;
- Law Enforcement Agencies/Tribal Police;
- Law Enforcement Victim Advocates;
- Prosecutors (Municipal, County and District);
- Court Personnel;
- Probation and Parole services;
- Local Jail and State Prison;
- Local Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Advocate Programs; and
- Batterer Intervention Program.

The stakeholder contacting potential HRT members should communicate:

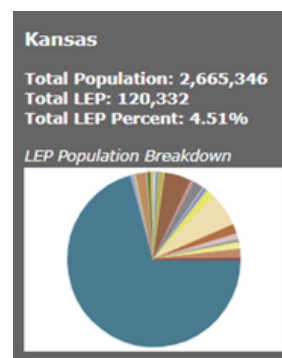
- What they hope to accomplish by implementing the HRT and lethality assessment framework;
- Why a representative from the agency is needed; and
- A commitment to send a representative to an initial meeting to learn more about the HRT and lethality assessment framework.

For additional guidance, review the [Community Tool Box's Creating and Maintaining Coalitions and Partnerships Toolkit](#).

Culturally Specific and Underserved Communities* [6]

The HRT must consult directly with culturally specific community organizations. Kansas communities have culturally diverse and underserved IPV victims and survivors. Marginalized victims and survivors of IPV often connect with organizations representing their identity/identities before, or in place of, calling law enforcement or a community-based domestic violence and sexual assault agency.

- Immigration or Refugee services;
- Tribal organizations;
- Organization specific to communities of color;
- Religious organizations/churches;
- An attorney, legal aid organization, and/or law firm that specializes in working with marginalized communities, such as an immigration attorney;
- Area Agencies on Aging;
- Organizations that serve individuals with disabilities; and
- Organizations that serve individuals who identify as LGBTQ+.



*limited English proficiency (LEP)

By developing a partnership with these programs, the response to victims and survivors seeking assistance can be done in an appropriate and culturally responsive manner. [2020 Racial and Ethnic Diversity Map](#)

The English language may also be a barrier in 4.51 percent of the Kansas population. HRT members can identify the non-English speaking populations in the area at [2015 Language Map App | LEP](#).

[6]*Additional resources and technical assistance provided by national experts recognized for their work with culturally specific and/or traditionally marginalized communities, include but not limited to [Ujima](#), [Esperanza United](#), [Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence](#), [Activating Change, Inc.](#), and the [Alliance of Local Service Organizations](#), to name a few.



HRT Assess Community

The following community assessment tools will aid HRT members in determining the community's resources to implement and sustain an HRT and lethality assessment framework and to define protocols.

[Sample Timeline](#)

Community Assessment Tools

- **Community Capacity** – to assess a community's needs, partnerships, and readiness to initiate a lethality assessment and/or high-risk teams
- **Community Inventory** – to create a full inventory of community's resources and data as it relates to domestic violence
- **Strengths and Challenges Analysis** – to analyze community's strengths and opportunities for improvement in the domestic violence response systems
- **System Mapping** – to construct the flow of information throughout the criminal justice process for a domestic violence case
- **Statutory Framework Analysis** – to identify local and state laws and policies

Identify Coordinator

The HRT will require a leadership position or positions to manage the work. Whether this position is full-time, part-time, or comprised of co-coordinators, it is strongly recommended the HRT employ a community-based domestic violence victim advocate to serve in this role.[7] It is also helpful to have a law enforcement officer as co-coordinator. Consensus should be established on whether the position is paid, or other benefits are created for managing the HRT.

[HRT Coordinator Duties](#)

[7] Many domestic violence agencies are non-profit nongovernmental organizations in “that the agency is not subject to any personnel or priority reorganization due to political shifts or union requirements”, which can help ensure consistency. Source: Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center. (n.d.) Domestic Violence High Risk Team. <http://dvhrt.org/info/frequently-asked-questions>

Develop High-Risk Team Protocols

A High-Risk Team (HRT) is not a strict formula to be followed, but rather a framework that is customized to the specific needs of a community and the applicable laws and policies within each jurisdiction. To envision how an HRT operates, the following models have received national recognition:

- [High-Risk Intervention Panel](#) by the Nashville Office of Family Safety;
- [Domestic Violence High-Risk Team](#) by the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center;
- [St. Paul Blueprint for Safety](#) by Praxis International; and
- [Multnomah County, Oregon – Domestic Violence Enhanced Response Team \(DVERT\)](#).

Each HRT member's role, including what information or interventions they can provide, will need to be defined in the protocols. The System Mapping and Statutory Framework Analysis worksheets provide detailed information regarding: the flow of data, reports, and documentation throughout the criminal justice process; the community-based supports and services for IPV victims throughout each stage of the process; and, the current laws and statutes within the community's jurisdiction.

Suggested policies and protocols for each type of agency to consider when implementing an HRT:

[Recommended High-Risk Team Agency Policies and Procedures.](#)

Example of High-Risk Team Member's Role

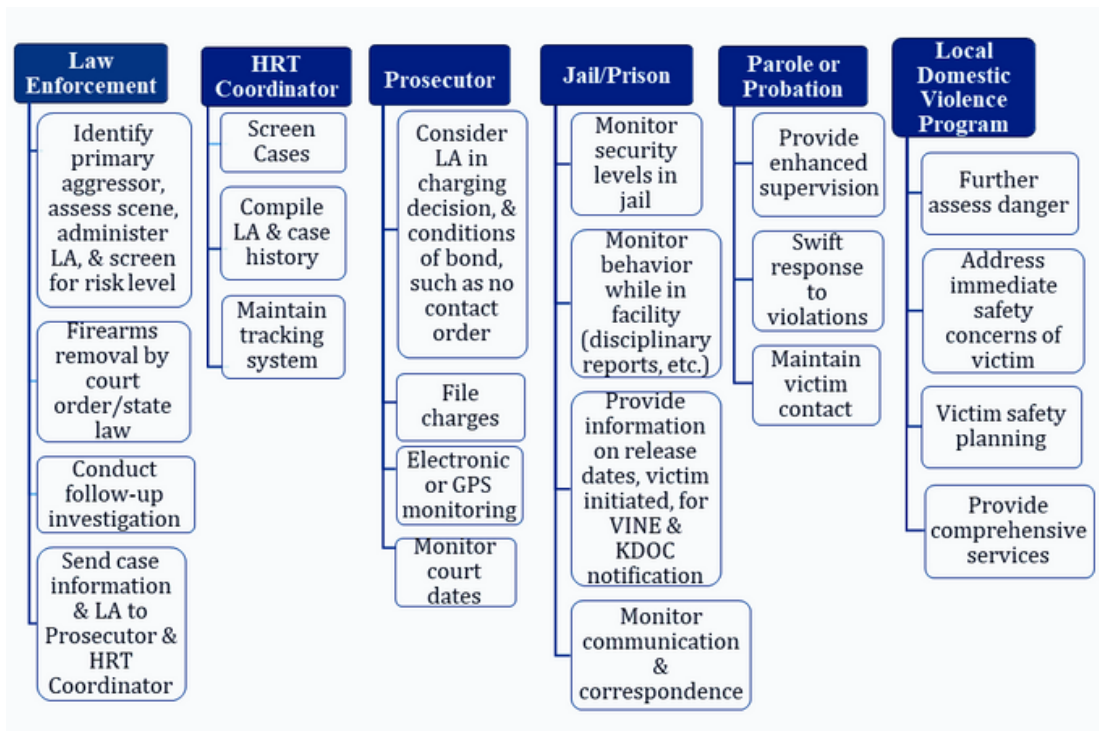


Table 1 Lethality Assessment Tool (LA)

HRT Protocol Questions to Consider for Case Referral, Selection, and Management

- How often will the HRT be meeting?
- Who will manage information received by the HRT?
- How many cases can the HRT realistically review in this timeframe?
- Are any cases automatically included for HRT review?
 - Is there a certain threshold/score that would qualify for automatic review?
 - Is officer override allowed with the lethality assessment? If so, would this qualify for automatic review?
- Beyond automatic inclusion, what other criteria should be considered when determining if a case will be reviewed?
- Who determines which referred cases will be reviewed by the HRT?
 - Is it the HRT Coordinator?
 - The entire HRT?
- Should high-risk cases identified by other agencies using a risk assessment tool be considered for review by the HRT?

Information shared during an HRT meeting may include:

- Completed Lethality Assessment and the Kansas Standard Offense Report; (as allowed by Kansas statute)
 - Criminal history and records as allowed by statute;
 - Upcoming court dates;
 - Protective orders and violations;
 - Probation terms and violations;
 - Release dates; and
 - Parole terms and violations.
- The HRT Coordinator would need to obtain a victim release to share information with the HRT. All records kept by the HRT should be minimal.

It is essential to have victims' voices represented as part of the HRT process. Using signed releases, advocates can share victims' requests for safety, fears, desires, needs, and other concerns.
[Survivor Informed Consent for High-Risk Team Case Review](#)

Utilizing Risk Assessments

Lethality assessment(s) can happen at various stages in the criminal justice process. The lethality assessments capture a moment in time and the dynamics of an intimate partner violence situation can change dramatically making a "score" assessed on Friday, inaccurate or in need of updating when the case is before a judge on Monday morning. Also, many of the lethality assessment tools are not designed for or validated for anything beyond a law enforcement officer's first response to a domestic violence call for service [i.e. [Lethality Assessment Program \(LAP\)](#) or [Arizona Intimate Partner Risk Assessment Instrument System \(APRAIS\)](#)]. However, there are tools that are designed for pre-trial release proceedings such as the [Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment \(ODARA\) tool](#). Since there is not a universal best practice, implementers of an assessment tool will need to make informed decisions about how they want to use the selected tool(s). It is important to note misuse of lethality assessments can create victim safety issues.



While each of the tools listed on page 11 provide great benefit, all the lethality tools and HRTs have unintended negative consequences. None of the listed tools have been validated for culturally specific and/or traditionally marginalized communities and can create harm for those communities. Additional issues regarding victim safety include discoverability and potential confidentiality violations with some of the tools. Therefore, contacting experts is recommended to ensure the assessments implemented have a positive benefit for all populations within the targeted communities.

Using more than one assessment or tool expands the HRT scope of work. In addition to the initial law enforcement lethality assessment, the HRT can incorporate the information collected at various points in time by different agencies to create and enhance interventions that promote safety and accountability. The [DV RISC link](#) lists additional tools that can be incorporated into the HRT Framework.

[Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence](#)

The [National Network to End Domestic Violence](#) is a nationally recognized training and technical assistance provider with an expertise in helping jurisdictions address confidentiality. National experts recognized for their work with culturally specific and/or traditionally marginalized communities, include but not limited to [Ujjima](#), [Esperanza United](#), [Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence](#), [Activating Change, Inc.](#), and the [Alliance of Local Service Organizations](#), to name a few.

Selecting a Lethality Assessment Tool

Law enforcement officers use a lethality assessment tool to help protect victims and families when responding to IPV incidents. It also assists officers in identifying the risk level to themselves the perpetrator imposes.

The following Lethality Assessment Tool Selection Guide includes a list of tools designed to predict the risk of lethal or near lethal violence and each utilize a validated and evidence-based scoring process. Law enforcement officers must be trained to administer the chosen assessment tool before using it.

Model:	Developed By/When:	Predicts Potential of:	Purpose:	Scoring:
<u>Danger Assessment (DA)</u>	Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell (1986)	Lethal or near lethal violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initially created for use in hospitals Informs victim of risk, assists in safety planning, and helps match DV services based on danger level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 yes/no questions The "yes" answers are totaled and a weighted score places a victim into a danger level
<u>Danger Assessment for Law Enforcement (DA-LE)</u>	Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center (2015)	Lethal or near lethal violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informs victim of their risk, connects victims with DV services, and assists in the criminal justice system Can be used in conjunction with the <u>DVHRT</u> model also by Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 yes/no questions from the DA Each risk factor is worth 1 point, and a total score of 7 or more is referred to the DVHRT for further review
<u>Lethality Assessment Program (LAP)</u>	Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (2005)	Lethal or near lethal violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists in connecting victims with DV services directly and immediately on-scene either via phone or a response advocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 yes/no questions from the DA The score categorizes the offender as "high danger" or "not high danger" Options for officer override
<u>Arizona Intimate Partner Risk Assessment Instrument System (APRAIS)</u>	Family Violence Institute, Arizona State University (2017)	Lethal or near lethal violence, severe re-assault	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used to assess risk, inform criminal justice system decision-making, and is intended to balance the rights and dignity of victims with the rights of the accused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First tier of 7 mandatory questions, second tier of 10 optional questions Responses from the first tier questions are totaled and the score places the case into one of three categories of risk Options for officer override



HRT Memorandum of Understanding and Confidentiality Agreement

The HRT memorandum of understanding (MOU) and confidentiality agreement establish mutually agreed upon requirements regarding the HRT protocols, team member roles/responsibilities, and what case-specific information can be disclosed as each partnering agency may have different privacy or confidentiality conditions. Each HRT member should work with their respective agency legal advisors concerning the content of such agreements.

[HRT Memorandum of Understanding and Confidentiality Agreement](#)
[High-Risk Team Release of Information](#)
[Survivor Informed Consent for High-Risk Team Case Review](#)



High-Risk Team Training

High-Risk Team (HRT) membership requires training on the HRT Framework and the selected lethality assessment tool. Below are recommended training topics.

Understanding the HRT Framework:

- HRT Membership;
- Coordination and Leadership;
- Case Referral and Selection;
- Case Management and Intervention;
- Evaluation; and
- Sustainability

The lethality assessment tool usually includes a specialized training process for law enforcement officers and other criminal justice system professionals. Depending on the tool, community size, and the needs identified by the HRT, the trainings will be conducted for new law enforcement officers, criminal justice system professionals, and HRT members.

Understanding the Lethality Assessment Process:

- Who conducts the lethality assessment;
- The completed lethality assessment and how to understand the results; and
- How the lethality assessment is used throughout the criminal justice process, information sharing, including what can be shared by each agency represented on the HRT

Additional Training Topics:

- Dynamics of domestic violence, IPV, and coercive control;
- Preventing arrest of victims and avoiding dual arrest;
- Defense of self, others, or property;
- Documenting history and context details in the Kansas Standard Offense Report;
- Trauma-informed interviews;
- Advanced IPV and domestic violence investigations;
- Strangulation; and
- Domestic violence-related crimes



Procedures for Law Enforcement Officers Utilizing the Lethality Assessment Tool

There are four primary components involved in the utilization of a lethality assessment tool. Please note the information below is a generalization of the process as each assessment tool will require specialized training and procedures.

The Law Enforcement Training and Technical Assistance Consortium [LETTAC](#) and the International Association of Chiefs of Police [IACP](#) may provide additional information for law enforcement officers using an assessment



1. Assessing the Scene

Before administering the assessment, responding officers should first identify whether the case involves intimate partner violence (IPV) and complete an initial investigation.

Identify Domestic Violence or Other Related Crimes

Dispatchers may not know whether the case involves IPV. Therefore, evidence revealing a IPV component to the crime may not be discovered until the law enforcement officer is conducting the initial investigation on the scene. Perpetrators of IPV often commit adjacent crimes in their attempts to gain power and control.[8] For example, an officer may respond to a “reckless driving crime” or a “property damage crime” and, upon assessing the scene, notice signs related to a pattern of IPV. Being able to accurately determine if a case involves IPV is essential for the proper use of lethality assessment tools.

Identify the Aggressor

After establishing a crime has occurred, the responding officer needs to identify the aggressor and the victim. The lethality assessment tool must only be administered to the victim. All law enforcement officers must be trained in Defense of Self, Others, or Property (DSOP) prior to utilizing the assessment tool. In some cases, both parties may have used force, and it is critical to consider additional information such as each party’s history with violence. Officers should determine whether force was used in DSOP. A victim’s arrest may lead to increased danger and further victimization. It can significantly decrease the likelihood of the victim seeking assistance from or cooperating with the criminal justice system and lessen the ability to prosecute the case.

[8] Kansas Governor’s Advisory Council on Domestic and Sexual Violence Response (September 2017). *Law enforcement domestic violence training curriculum: The investigation*. [Training curriculum, presenter notes].

To determine if Defense of Self, Others, or Property (DSOP) is present, officers should consider: [9]

- The existence of offensive and defensive injuries
- A prior history of violence and/or abuse
- The size, strength, and bulk of the parties
- The relative severity and extent of the injuries
- The likelihood of future harm to each party
- The relative fear of each party to the other
- Any other evidence available to the officer

For more information on DSOP training, contact a law enforcement training site near you, and review [K.S.A. 22-2307](#).

2. Administering the Lethality Assessment Tool

After the initial response, determination, and investigation, when an officer has separated the victim and perpetrator, the officer will ask the victim a series of questions on the assessment form.

Obtain Consent

Law enforcement should not assume victims are prepared to discuss or disclose their experience of violence. Intimate partner violence is violating and traumatic. The victim may expect privacy and/or may be reluctant to participate in the legal process. **Law Enforcement Officers must obtain consent from the victim before administering the lethality assessment tool.** Additionally, the law enforcement officer shall inform the victim what the assessment encompasses and who will have access. The lethality assessment is discoverable in court; therefore, if charges are filed the perpetrator can access the information the victim discloses. A perpetrator's ability to see what a victim has reported about the fear and violence they have experienced can have dangerous consequences for the victim's safety. The officer should reassure the victim that their participation is voluntary, and they may stop sharing at any time. After the law enforcement officer has provided this information, **the victim must agree to proceed with the assessment.**

Administer the Assessment

Law enforcement officers are encouraged to use a relational approach while administering each question in the assessment to create an environment where the victim feels comfortable. Given that assessments have undergone rigorous testing in their exact written form, adapting or changing the original questions on the tool hinders its function in effectively predicting risk. However, officers may ask additional questions for purpose of the investigation without impacting the validity of the tool.



The victim's answers to the assessment questions help the law enforcement officer gather a history of the relationship and contextualize the elements of power and control. While the answers to these questions may contribute to or overlap with other narratives in the report, the assessment should never replace the Kansas Standard Offense Report.

Ask Follow-Up Questions

The law enforcement officer should use information gathered in the lethality assessment to seek additional context by asking clarifying questions. For example, if the victim reports firearms in the home, the officer could ask follow-up questions about how many firearms exist in the home, where and how they are stored, and what type they are. Even though these questions are not on the assessment tool, it can be helpful for the victim's safety planning, the investigation, and the safety of the law enforcement officer.

[9]Kansas Governor's Advisory Council on Domestic and Sexual Violence Response (September 2017). Law enforcement domestic violence training curriculum: The investigation. [Training curriculum, presenter notes].



3. Screening for Risk Level

The number of “yes” responses are calculated, and this score indicates risk level.

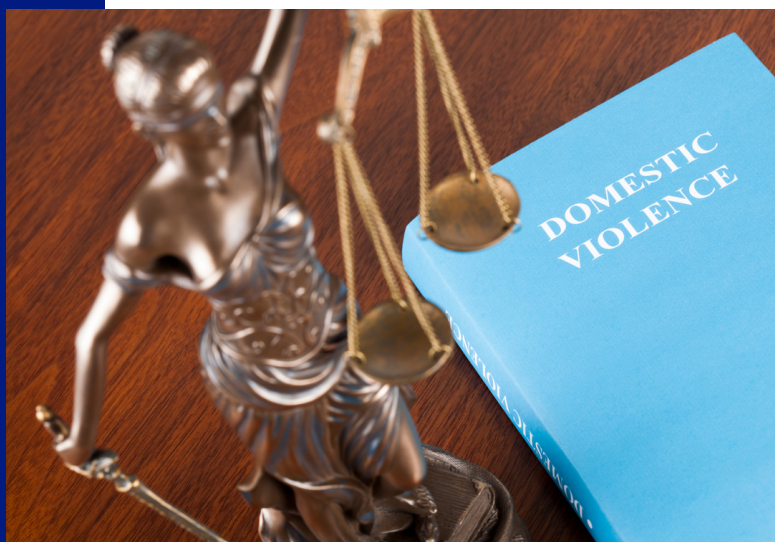
Officer Override

Some lethality assessment tools include the option of a law enforcement officer-override. Officers can mark the assessment as “high-risk” based on their best judgment, even if victims do not score “high-risk” from responses to the questions. There are several potential reasons victims’ responses to the assessment may not score “high-risk,” such as fear of their answers getting back to the perpetrator, or memory lapse due to trauma, intoxication, or physical injuries. A law enforcement officer override option allows officers to recommend a further review of the case, connect the victim with services, and refer the case to an HRT.

Law Enforcement Policy for On-Scene Lethality Assessment

Inform the Victim of Risk and Services

After administering the lethality assessment tool, the officer must inform the victim about community-based and law enforcement-based domestic violence services. A victim scoring high-risk should be informed of the risk and offered the opportunity to connect directly with an advocate on-scene or by phone. The law enforcement officer must follow its department’s domestic violence procedures and provide the victim with required resources (K.S.A. 2021 Supp. 22-2307).

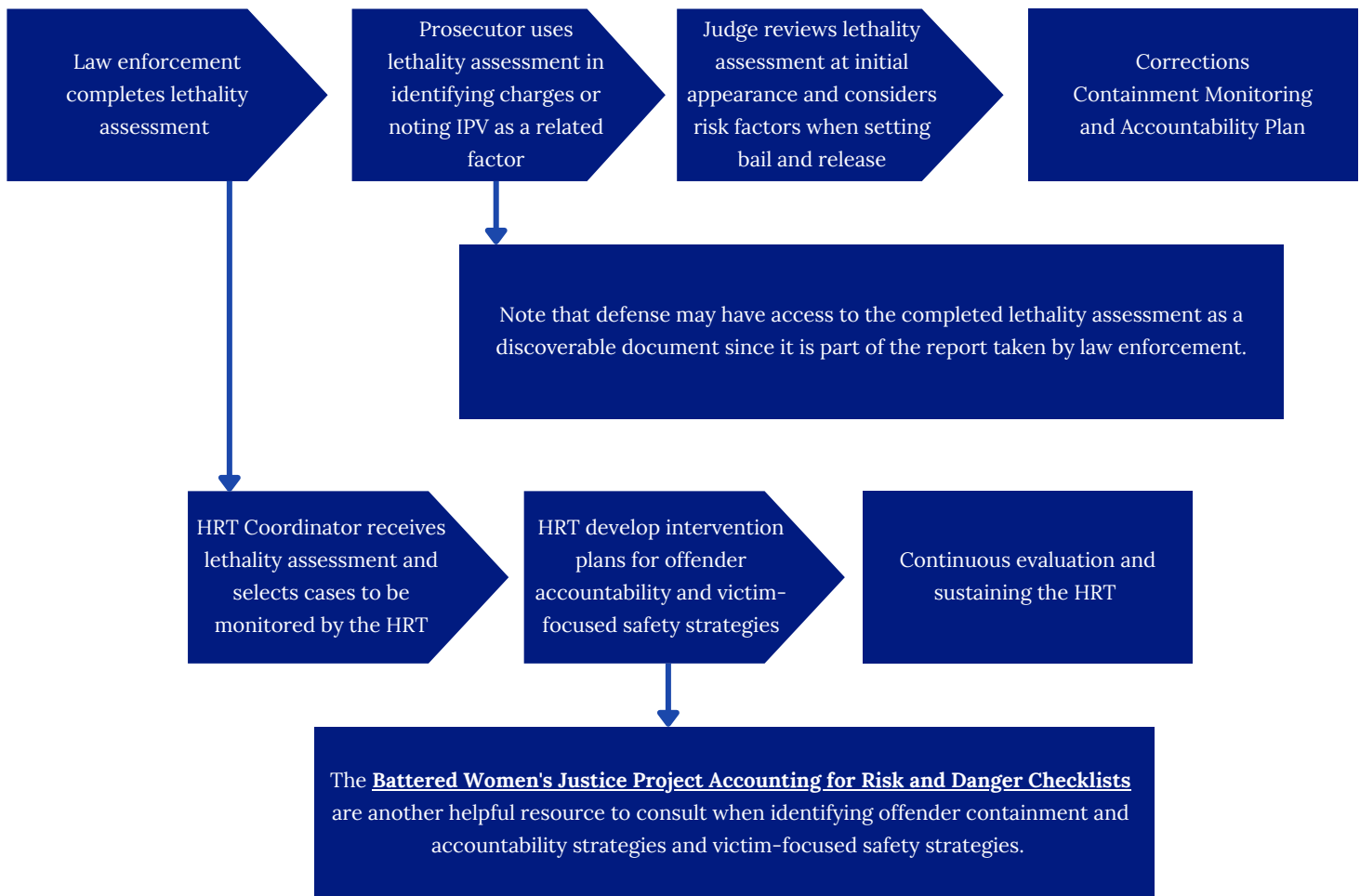


4. Utilizing the Lethality Assessment in the Criminal Justice Process

The completed lethality assessment tool should be attached to the law enforcement officer's final report, which can be utilized throughout the criminal justice system. The HRT determines the policy and procedure needed to ensure the completed assessment tool is made available to the appropriate criminal justice system personnel and/or community-based domestic violence services. And, describe how the information will be kept confidential. For example, the completed lethality assessment should be available to the prosecutor when determining charges and to the judge at the initial appearance. The judge may consider the lethality assessment tool when setting bail and release conditions. As a discoverable document, the defense also has access to the lethality assessment tool.



Below is an example how a lethality assessment report may be utilized in the criminal justice system. The system mapping and statutory framework analysis information will be helpful when determining at which stage in the criminal justice system the completed lethality assessment is relevant to share.



Review section "Utilizing Risk Assessments" page 9 on how to incorporate additional assessments throughout the criminal justice process to increase safeguards for victims.

Evaluating and Sustaining the High-Risk Team



Evaluating the High-Risk Team and Lethality Assessment Process

Evaluation is an essential element in measuring the effectiveness and impact of the HRT and lethality assessment processes and identifying any gaps in the criminal justice system or its responses to victims and offenders.

Sustaining the High-Risk Team

The HRT framework will need to incorporate a sustainability plan.

Three primary factors need to be considered when developing a plan:

- on-going training;
- continuous funding for the HRT coordinator; and
- the capacity and resources each HRT agency will incur due to increases in services. (Examples include: community-based domestic violence victim advocacy programs may experience an increase in need for shelter, advocacy, and crisis support services; law enforcement officers will likely increase their time on the scene; and an increase in new cases to the court system.)



The Data Collection Measures and Community Toolbox Recommendations will aid the HRT in designing timely and consistent data collection methods.

Kansas Coalition against Sexual and Domestic Violence - KCSADV can provide support throughout the stages of toolkit implementation, including:

- Answer questions on using a lethality assessment and high-risk team
- Assist with the development of the implementation
- Tailor a needs assessment to specific community parameters
- Guide agencies through lethality assessment selection
- Make individualized recommendations on local policies and procedures
- Provide an overview of trainings
- Support communities through the implementation process and execution of the tool and high-risk team
- Refer to national resources for guidance expertise and guidance
- Customize evaluation and analyses processes identifying challenges and solutions

Resources

Risk Assessment

Books

No Visible Bruises by Rachel Louise Snyder

Assessing Dangerousness: Violence by Sexual Offenders, Batterers, and Child Abusers by Jacquelyn Campbell

Websites

[Risk Needs Responsivity and the Role of Risk Assessments](#) – Center for Court Innovation DV RISC

[Assessment Tool Overview](#) – Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian & Gay Survivors of Abuse

[Safety and Self Determination](#) – Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian & Gay Survivors of Abuse

[Domestic Violence Risk Assessments at a Glance](#) – Center for Court Innovation DV RISC

[The Danger Assessment for Law Enforcement \(DA-LE\)](#) – The Geiger Institute

[The Arizona Intimate Partner Risk Assessment Instrument System \(APRAIS\)](#) – Arizona State University

[The Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment \(ODARA\)](#) – Waypoint Center for Mental Health Care

Videos

[Risk Needs Responsivity and the Role of Risk Assessments](#) – Center for Court Innovation DV RISC

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